GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3933
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2006
PROBLEMS OF INDIANS WORKERS IN GULF
Bellarmin Shri A.V.;Dhanaraju Dr. K.;Meghwal Shri Kailash;Mehta Shri Alok Kumar;Nedurumalli Janardhana Reddy Shri ;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Panda Shri Prabodh;Patil Smt. Rupatai Diliprao Nilangekar;Tripathi Shri Chandramani

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether a large number of Indian workers in the Gulf have not been paid their dues by their contracting Organisations/authorities;

(b) If so, whether the Government has blacklisted some Qatar based companies in this regard;

(c) If so, the details thereof;

(d) Whether complaints regarding ill treatment and exploitation of workers are rampant, particularly in Gulf countries;

(e) Whether numerous cases/disputes regarding death benefits, legal dues etc. of Indian workers are pending in several countries;

(f) If so, the complete details thereof, country-wise;

(g) Whether an MoU already exists under which Gulf companies are expected to pay fixed minimum wages to Indian workers there;

(h) If so, the details and the reasons for not complying with the same; and

(i) The steps taken/ proposed to be taken to protect the interests of the Indian workers abroad? ANSWER

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) As per the information collected from the Indian Missions in the Gulf, sporadic complaints are received from Indian workers relating to non-payment or delayed payment of salaries and other benefits.

(b)&(c) Presently, there are sixteen Qatari Companies which have been blacklisted on the basis of reports received from the Indian Mission concerned.

(d) to (f) Complaints regarding ill treatment and exploitation of workers as well as cases/disputes regarding service benefits, legal dues etc. are received. The Indian Missions are taking up such cases with the Labour Ministry and offering legal advice to the workers if they need to go to court.

(g) No, Sir.

(h) Does not arise.

(i) With a view to curb the exploitation of Indian workers going abroad for employment, it has been made mandatory w.e.f. 15.11.2003 for the Recruiting Agents to submit all the employment documents, viz., demand letter, power of attorney and specimen employment contract in original for obtaining emigration clearance. Further, in respect of vulnerable categories of workers, i.e., unskilled labour and housemaids/ domestic workers; and in respect of nine countries, viz., Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Tanzania, Israel, Jordan, Sudan, Kuwait and Brumei, these employment documents are required to be attested by the concerned Indian Mission(s). In addition, our Missions have, with the help of Community Welfare Associations and other community support groups, been providing legal assistance/ counselling to protect the interest of Indian workers. Besides, the Emigration Act, 1983 is proposed to be amended with a view to reinforce protection to the Indian emigrants. The Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana has also been upgraded recently to provide better benefits to the emigrants.